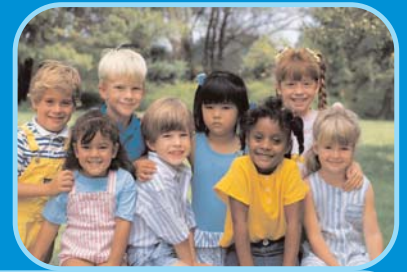


# For the Children



Summer 2005



Foster/Adoptive Parent News

## "National Foster Parent Month"

By Angela Stangle



The month of May is set aside as National Foster Parent Month. We would like to take this time to thank you and your dedication that you have given to the children that are put into your care. We extend our appreciation to you at this time and recognize the love, hard work and perseverance you put forth every day to help provide for the children that need care.

Every year about 170,000 families nationwide, care for approximately half a million children whose parents cannot care for them. You take on this role silently and oftentimes it seems you receive little gratitude. Without you these children may not know what a family is like. You have the opportunity to help these children in ways that cannot be measured.

There is also a shortage of foster homes that can help provide for these children. Part of this month is dedicated to getting the word out of the need for foster homes. So while we appreciate your dedication we also are looking for more families, like you that are willing to open their homes, their arms and their hearts to these children to help make a difference.

Enjoy this month and enjoy the positive influence you have on the children you have opened your home to.

The National Foster Parent Association is launching a nationwide campaign to raise awareness of the lack of foster homes for these youth. Blue ribbons can be ordered to help show your support. They can be ordered at: [www.fostercaremonth.org](http://www.fostercaremonth.org). If you would like more information about the Blue Ribbon campaign you can visit the National Foster Parent Association website at: [www.nfpainc.org](http://www.nfpainc.org).



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## Food Allergies

by: Angela Stangle

Food allergies can appear at any age. Oftentimes they are seen as an annoyance, something else to look out for but remember that many food allergies can escalate. The more often someone is exposed to an allergen their reaction can increase and overtime can escalate to a level that can require immediate attention from emergency room staff.

A food allergy is the body's response to a food that it has determined to be harmful. The body creates antibodies to the food and the next time it is ingested these antibodies attack, creating the allergy. The chemicals the body releases cause the allergic symptoms. It can affect any area of the body but most symptoms can affect one or more of the following: respiratory system, gastrointestinal tract, skin or cardiovascular system.

It is estimated that approximately 11 million people suffer from a true food allergy. There is no cure from a food allergy. It is best to simply avoid the allergen altogether to prevent an allergic reaction.

While someone can be allergic to any food there are eight foods that account for 90% of all allergic reactions. Those foods are: milk, egg, peanut, tree nut (cashew, walnut, etc.), fish, shellfish, soy and wheat.

In following issues you can find tips on how to manage some of these common allergies.



## Freebies for Children

Many stores offer a kid's club or Story Time for free or for a small fee. On the designated date (usually a Saturday), the kids are invited to participate. Some of the companies that have a program are:

**Home Depot and Lowes** (free) – Children make an item made out of wood. They get to hammer and nail the wood together. Everything is provided compliments of the store. Check with your local store to find out the day of the month and the time.

**Michaels Crafts** (small fee) – Children make a craft item. Supplies are usually provided. The Kids' Club is on Saturdays.

**Lakeshore Learning Store** (free) – Children make a craft item. Supplies are provided. Every Saturday from 11:00 to 3:00.

**Border's Books and Barnes and Noble** – Children can join Story Time to hear different stories. The stores also offer special occasion Story Times that offer treats or crafts. Sign up on their mailing list. The stores also offer a frequent buyer card for children's books. After buying ten books, you get a certificate towards your next purchase. The cards are free so don't forget to ask for one.

Some restaurants have children eat free on a set day of the week. Check out Denny's, IHOP and Jose's Mexican Food.

Also, don't forget to sign children up for Birthday Clubs. Burger King offers a free item on a child's birthday if they are signed up beforehand. Fiesta Village sends a certificate for a free game of golf during the child's birthday month. Some bowling alleys send coupons for a free game of bowling. Toys R Us sends a \$1 off gift card and the children receive a phone call from Geoffrey on their birthday. When you see an advertisement for Birthday Clubs, sign the children up. You will usually be sent a coupon for some item around the child's birthday.

## Upcoming Adoption Trainings

Family as Healing Agent:

- Learn about the effects of trauma.
- Understand the message behind child behaviors.
- Develop healing parental responses.
- Seminar for both adoptive and foster families
- Foster Family annual training hours available
- Children's Groups at all locations
- Refreshments served

Victorville	San Bernardino	Rancho Cucamonga
May 16, 2005	May 11, 2005	May 11, 2005
June 13, 2005	June 1, 2005	June 1, 2005
9:00 am – 12:00 p.m.	9:00 am – 12:00 p.m.	1:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Please RSVP to 891-3393 and provide us with the ages and special needs for the children attending.

## **STATE FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATIONS/ STATE CARE PROVIDER ASSOCIATIONS REPRESENTATIVES**

### **San Bernardino Foster Parent Association:**

Anita Hearne, President      PHONE: (909) 336-0834  
P. O. Box 2307      FAX: none  
Lake Arrowhead, CA 92352      EMAIL: none

### **Association Meeting:**

3<sup>rd</sup> Monday-7:00pm  
Fellowship Hall  
First Church of God  
2595 Date St., SBDO  
\*\*No meetings in December\*\*

### **Foster and Relative Emphasis Association (FARE):**

Carolyn Buchanan, President      PHONE: (760) 951-8877  
13972 Luna Road  
Victorville, CA 92392-7445

3<sup>rd</sup> Monday - 6:00pm - 9:00 pm  
Victorville CPS  
15480 Ramona Ave.

### **Inland Valley Foster Parent Association/Southern Regional Vice President:**

Patricia Negus, President      PHONE: (909) 628-4023  
12419 Oaks      FAX: (909) 902-9969  
Chino, CA 91710      EMAIL: none

1<sup>ST</sup> Monday - 6:30pm - 9:30 pm  
Ontario Doubletree Hotel  
222 N. Vineyard Ave.  
\*\*No meetings in January, July, August,  
October & December\*\*

### **Morongo Basin Foster Parent Association:**

Kathy Bingham, President      PHONE: (760) 365-4028  
7012 Prescott Avenue      FAX: (760) 365-4028(call first)  
Yucca Valley, CA 92284      EMAIL: none

2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday-6:30 pm  
Pomona Bank  
57291-29 Palms Hwy  
\*\*No meetings in July, August or December\*\*

### **Victor Valley Loving Hearts Association:**

Ethel Moon, President      PHONE: (760) 247-7836  
15213 Ramona Avenue      FAX: (760) 247-7837  
Apple Valley, CA 92307      EMAIL: [ethel.jim@verizon.net](mailto:ethel.jim@verizon.net)

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday - 7:00pm - 9:00 pm  
Victorville CPS  
15480 Ramona Ave.  
\*\*No meetings in July, August or December\*\*

### **High Desert Care Provider Association:**

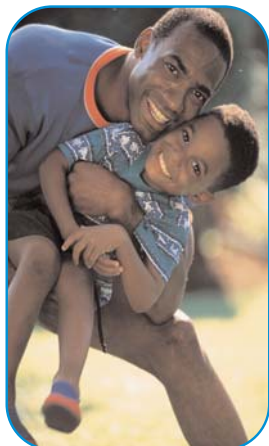
Pat Mathews, President      PHONE: (760) 253-7726  
25524 Dayton Avenue      FAX: (760) 253-7726  
CA 92311      EMAIL: [froggie@mscomm.com](mailto:froggie@mscomm.com)

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday - 6:30pm-8:30pm  
Victorville CPS  
15480 Ramona Ave.  
\*\*No meetings in July, August or December\*\*Barstow,

### **GREAT/ Kinship Care Foster Parent Association:**

Ida Valencia, President      PHONE: (760) 345-2072  
45074 Big Canyon St.      FAX: (760) 345-2072 (call first)  
Indio, CA 92201      EMAIL: none

2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday - 10:00am - Noon  
Whole Enchilada Restaurant  
10276 Foothill Blvd.  
Rancho Cucamonga  
\*\*No meetings in July & August\*\*



### **California State Foster Parent Association:**

Cora Pearson, President      (310) 539-0268  
24414 Marigold Avenue      FAX: (310) 539-8120  
Harbor City, CA 90710

Nina Coake, Past President      (909) 947-8323  
1456 E. Philadelphia Sp 240  
Ontario, CA 91761

### **California State Care Providers Association:**

Fred Leiner, President      (818) 998-4461  
9849 Glade Avenue      FAX: (818) 998-4204  
Chatsworth, CA 91311      Email: [fred@fosterparents.com](mailto:fred@fosterparents.com)

### **Foster Care Ombudsman:**

1-877-846-1602





## How Effective are Antibacterial Products?

Many of us are using 'antibacterial' products because we believe them to be better at killing germs and preventing illnesses. However, there is now support of the theory that these products may actually make bacteria resistant to therapeutic antibiotics. Here are reasons you may choose to avoid antibacterial products.

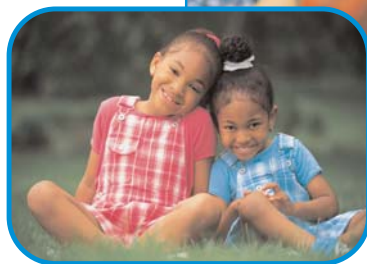
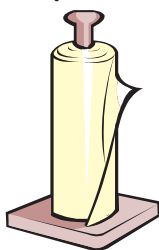


- Antibacterial products are only effective in killing bacteria. They do not prevent the spread of viral infections.
- The antibacterial components of the products need to be left on the surface for two minutes to be effective
- The environmental effect of washing these products down the drain is unknown.
- These products give us false security. Bacteria live everywhere, but most are not harmful.
- Waterless sanitizers mainly consist of alcohol, which is flammable.



Antibacterial products are used in hospitals to prevent infections. However, the products are carefully monitored. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), washing your hands thoroughly with ordinary soap and water is one of the most effective ways to ward off infections. To effectively wash your hands, you should rub them with soap for at least thirty seconds and rinse well. Paper towels are more effective to preventing the spread of germs than towels. It is a good idea to have a roll in the bathroom. You should wash your hands often.

- Before, during and after you prepare food.
- Before you eat.
- After you use the bathroom.
- After handling animals or animal waste.
- When your hands are dirty.
- When someone in your home is sick.



## Youth Are Never Too Old to Be Adopted

By Cynthia Flynn and Wendy Welch  
(North American Council on Adoptable Children-Fall 2003-  
Adoptalk)  
PART 2

### Tips for Facilitating Successful Teen Adoptions

The Successful Adolescent Adoption Study was designed to explore the concept of success in adolescent adoptions and determine what leads to success. In listening to adolescent adoptees and their adoptive parents, it is clear that the adoption process needs to be adapted to better meet adolescents' needs. Below are recommendations for facilitating the successful adoption of adolescents.

**Individually prepare adolescents for the adoption process** by 1) explaining their legal status; 2) offering adoption as a viable option for permanence; 3) offering support and information as they consider the adoption option; 4) explaining how the adoption process will proceed; 5) assessing adolescents to determine their level of adjustment regarding birth family issues; and 6) providing support as needed to help them deal appropriately with birth family issues.

**Employ caseworkers for adolescent adoptions who have positive attitudes about teen adoptions** and who are eager to find homes for adolescents. Streamline the process as much as possible so that the teens can be adopted when they are ready.

**Include recruitment strategies that offer opportunities for adults in the community to get to know teens in foster care.** Work through ongoing programs like Big Brothers Big Sisters or establish a new program with similar opportunities for pairing adults and adolescents. After attachments develop, employ traditional teen adoption recruitment strategies.

**Initiate or continue contact with biological families when it is safe to do so and teens desire it.** Adoptive parents can teach teens how to be safe during these contacts so that teens can learn to protect themselves physically and emotionally.

### Going Through the Adoption Process

When asked to identify the difficulties they anticipated prior to adoption, the youth had a lot to say. Among their concerns: adjusting to a new family, school, and community; missing birth family members; and worrying about disruption.

"I didn't know if I would like my parents."

"I thought I would not be accepted, but I have friends."

"It would be difficult to show trust for my parents when they told me things."

"I had to change schools again. I was starting a new middle school, which is a whole new ball game."

"Before the adoption, I was real hesitant because none of the other relationships ever worked out, and I didn't think this one would...but I'm still here."

When asked to rate adoption from 1 (low) to 10 (high), most were enthusiastic.

continued on page 5...

“I would give it a 10 because I have a normal life now. I have a driver’s license, and I drive. I have friends, and I get to go on overnights. There is no comparison to what my life is now and what it was before.”

“Number 10 all the way. Everything I ever wanted from a family, I got love, comfort, warmth, someone to love me.”

“Eight or nine, there isn’t really a negative part. The whole experience is really great. There are some feelings that were not really great like wondering if they were going to keep me. I didn’t have those feelings after we went to court, and they officially gave me my last name.”

A few study participants gave lower ratings—a seven, a five, and even a one. Without exception, though, the low ratings were given because the process took so long!

### The Best and Worst Parts of Being Adopted

At the time the youth were interviewed, all of their adoptions had been finalized for at least one year. Many adoptions had been finalized for five years or more. Adoptees were more willing to share their feelings about the best and worst parts of adoption. The best aspects mirrored their anticipated benefits.

“The best part is to have a family and a home to come home to when you’re not feeling safe.”

“I have more freedom, as in I feel more like a human being and not like someone’s property. Before I was adopted, I was the property of the state, and when you are property you can only do so much. Just being adopted feels better.”

“If it weren’t for my mom, I wouldn’t be where I am today. In the beginning, I had given up. I really tested her, especially in school. There is no way I’d be where I am today without being adopted. The best part is the relationship I have with my mom now.”

“My parents persevered and understood me. I didn’t make it easy for them.”

“The attention is the best part. The attention and love are something I never got when I was little.”

Aside from typical teen complaints (“The worst part is having curfew when I’m not in church.”), many of the adolescents could not think of a worst part about the adoption itself. They did however, express sadness at being separated from old friends and birth family members.

“The worst part is not being able to go home to see my friends.”

“It’s hard not seeing my real mom.”

### Why It Worked for Me

Toward the end of the interview, adoptees reflected on what made their adoption work and what advice they would have for teens thinking about adoption. Reasons given for success were quite varied, though themes of perseverance and commitment were evident in most responses.

“It worked for me because my mom *is not* a nutbag. We worked together. We went to counseling. We never gave up.”

“My dad is very laid back and doesn’t yell, and that was what I needed. I need him for support.”

“I think it worked because my dad and I had a chance to get to know each other, and we were very close. We hardly had any difficulties, and we were both dedicated to making it work.”

“It worked because my mom and I had a lot of things in common.”

When asked to give advice to other teens considering adoption, the adoptees shared their wisdom and experience.

“If you get a chance, it’s the greatest thing in the world. No matter how old you are, you still need love and to give love. You need someone to see on the holidays, and you need grandparents. You need a family and the support they give.”

“Do it! You don’t want to be part of the system until you are 18 because you will have no one. It is never too late for a teen to be adopted.”

“Seize the opportunity. You will have a stable family and someone to fall back on. You will have a last name to call your own. You don’t have to worry about where you will be next week or next month.”

“Yes, I would do it again...before I was kind of scared to be adopted, and I know what it feels like and how nice it is.”

“Don’t give up. There is someone out there for everyone.”

“Don’t hold back your feelings. If you want to be adopted, don’t hold back because of what peers think. Do what is right for you and what’s going to help you in life.”

“If it looks like it is going to be a good situation, go for it.”

It is not always easy for youth to verbally express feelings and opinions about adoption, but those who had a chance to share their wisdom and opinions through the Successful Adolescent Adoption Study became very vocal. Now it is time for teens considering adoption, adoptive parents, and adoption workers to hear their words and act accordingly. **Youth are never too old to be adopted.**

Contributed by Tamara Scott, Gifford Street, an adoption worker who has facilitated numerous older children adoptions, two who were “adult adoptions” after the “child” turned 18. Interested in San Bernardino County, call **1-800-722-4477**.

## Shine a Light Breakfast

The Seventh Annual Shine a Light on Child Abuse Prevention Awards Breakfast was held this year on Wednesday, March 30, 2005. The theme for this year's event was "It only takes a minute." The event was attended by many. Below are the foster parents that received the award and their bios.

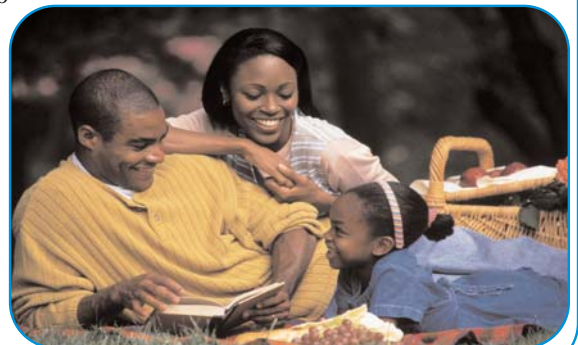
**Patrick & Lynette Mathis** were raising two sons, both still at home when they became licensed foster parents so they could take in a child who was deaf whom they had met through their church family. They heard about Child Share, a program that works with deaf children, and applied to initially provide childcare for other foster parents with deaf children. They met and fell in love with the child they eventually had placed with them through this program. The care of this child offered many joys and many challenges, including altering the physical environment. The entire family learned signing and became actively part of the deaf culture. Soon after this child's placement, Patrick and Suzie were approached about two younger siblings who had come into the foster care system, one a baby. They had to do some "soul searching," but it didn't take long for the whole family to decide whole-heartedly that this was what they should do. They embraced the two additional children into their family and have since adopted all three siblings. The family realized that their mission was to foster children, but they had no more room, so they added two more bedrooms and a bathroom to their home. Today they have one biological son at home, five foster children and their three adopted children. The selflessness of this family and their total commitment to caring for these children is awesome. They meet the children's need for love, stability and direction.

**Charlotte Beamon** has been a foster parent since 1994. She has been an advocate for children's rights and has done guardianship for some of the children placed in her home. Charlotte takes in children with medical problems as well as emotional behavioral problems and has helped them to heal and overcome these obstacles. She also has done an exceptional job at working with birth families and assisted on reunification with their children. Charlotte goes over and above in her work with the children in her care. She takes them shopping, makes certain they are involved in outside activities to enrich their personal growth, and involves them in the planning of their future. The children are a true part of her family...they are her children. She has a wonderful working relationship with social workers and they like to place children in her home because of her warm relationship with "her girls." Charlotte is truly deserving of this recognition.

**Fred & Wanda Manley** have been foster parents with San Bernardino County since 1985. They started their care of foster children in their Chino Hills home and continued that care when they moved to Yucca Valley. They have cared for a total of 106 foster children and have adopted two. Despite the health problems experienced by Fred, they continue to provide a warm, safe environment for the children placed in their care. They are actively involved in the Foster Parent Association in the Yucca Valley area and are pillars of support for other foster parents. They truly help the children in their home to grow and thrive. Social workers like to place children with Fred and Wanda because they know they will be well-taken care of. The Yucca Valley office depends on the Manley's to take care of special needs children. They go over and above in meeting the needs of all their children.

**Patricia & Jerry Negus** have been foster parents for almost 30 years. They provide care for girls from the age of two to eighteen, specializing in caring for children with severe emotional problems. Patricia & Jerry are foster parents, guardianship parents and adoptive parents. They go over and above in their care for the children in their home by providing a stable and nurturing environment. Many of the children they have cared for, return to visit, and maintain continuous contact with them. Patricia & Jerry have participated on several committees with the Department of Children's Services to promote foster parent rights and have acted as mediators and advocates to resolve parent issues. Patricia is currently President of the Inland Valley Foster Parent Association and is also Regional Vice President for the State Foster Parent Association.

**Evelyn & Lucas Binns** are dedicated foster parents who have provided stability and love for a number of foster youth for over ten years. They have cared for a medically fragile child who succumbed to his terminal ailment as well as assisted children in the reunification with their birth parents. They currently have a child placed in their home with moderate/severe Reaction Attachment Disorder. This child has resided in over 13 placements, and the Binns were willing and able to read material and attend training to aid them in parenting this child. They have had this child in their home for nearly two years and are committed to keeping him in their care even though they endure daily challenges. They have endured many days of stress and frustration, yet they remain committed and passionate about rearing this child. The Binns have provided this child with a stable home, something he has never had the opportunity to experience without conditions of abuse. Lucas and Evelyn Binns are an exceptional couple and a true example of excellence in the area of fostering; a job that often goes unnoticed and unrewarded.





## Summer Safety Tips

### Fun in the Sun

Babies under 6 months.

- Avoiding sun exposure and dressing infants in lightweight long pants and long-sleeved shirts and brimmed hats is still the top recommendation from the AAP to prevent sunburn. However when adequate clothing and shade are not available a minimal amount of sunscreen can be applied to small areas, such as the infant's face and the back of the hands.

For Young Children

- Apply sunscreen at least 30 minutes before going outside, and use sunscreen even on cloudy days. The SPF should be at least 15.

For Older Children

- The first, and best, line of defense against the sun is covering up. Wear a hat with a three-inch brim or a bill facing forward, sunglasses (look for sunglasses that block 99-100% of ultraviolet rays), and cotton clothing with a tight weave.
- Stay in the shade whenever possible, and avoid sun exposure during the peak intensity hours - between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Use a sunscreen with an SPF (sun protection factor) of 15 or greater. Be sure to apply enough sunscreen - about one ounce per sitting for a young adult.
- Reapply sunscreen every two hours, or after swimming or sweating.



### Heat Stress in Exercising Children

- The intensity of activities that last 15 minutes or more should be reduced whenever high heat and humidity reach critical levels.
- At the beginning of a strenuous exercise program or after traveling to a warmer climate, the intensity and duration of exercise should be limited initially and then gradually increased during a period of 10 to 14 days to accomplish acclimatization to the heat.
- Before prolonged physical activity, the child should be well-hydrated. During the activity, periodic drinking should be enforced, eg. each 20 minutes, 5 oz of cold tap water or a flavored sports drink for a child weighing 88 lbs, and 9 oz for an adolescent weighing 132 lbs, even if the child doesn't feel thirsty.
- Clothing should be light-colored and lightweight and limited to one layer of absorbent material to facilitate evaporation of sweat. Sweat-saturated garments should be replaced by dry garments.

### Pool Safety

- Never leave children alone in or near the pool, even for a moment.
- Install a fence at least four-foot high around all four sides of the pool.
- Make sure pool gates self-close and self-latch at a height children can't reach.
- Keep rescue equipment and a portable telephone near the pool.
- Avoid inflatable swimming aids such as "floaties." They are not a substitute for approved life vests and can give children a false sense of security.
- Children are not developmentally ready for swim lessons until after their fourth birthday. Swim programs for children under 4 should not be seen as a way to decrease the risk of drowning.
- Whenever infants or toddlers are in or around water, an adult should be within arm's length, providing "touch supervision.."

### Boat Safety

- Children should wear life jackets at all times when on boats or near bodies of water.
- Make sure the life jacket is the right size for your child. The jacket should not be loose. It should always be worn as instructed with all straps belted.
- Blow-up water wings, toys, rafts, and air mattresses should never be used as life jackets or life preservers.
- Adults should wear life jackets for their own protection and to set a good example.

### Bug Safety

- Don't use scented soaps, perfumes or hair sprays on your child.
- Avoid areas where insects nest or congregate.
- Avoid dressing children in clothing with bright colors or flowery prints.
- To remove a visible stinger from skin, gently scrape it off horizontally with a credit card or your fingernail.
- Insect repellents containing DEET are the most effective.
- The concentration of DEET in products ranges from less than 10% to over 30%. The benefits of DEET reach a peak at a concentration of 30%, the maximum concentration currently recommended for infants and children. DEET should not be used on children under 2 months of age.
- The concentration of DEET varies significantly from product to product so read the label of any product you purchase.

These safety tips are courtesy of the American Academy of Pediatrics and are published with their permission.



## Foster Youth Mentoring Project

There are about 29,000 foster youth, ages 14-18, in California's foster care system. They spend their time moving from placement to placement and are not necessarily afforded the opportunity to form long lasting, influential relationships with adults in their lives. This puts them at a disadvantage once they have emancipated out of the system. Without being given the opportunity to develop skills and relationships that many of us take for granted these youth can find themselves homeless or in need of immediate help.

San Bernardino County has a program in place to help these foster youth. The Independent Living Program allows these youth to obtain necessary skills needed to survive and thrive once they have emancipated out of the system. The youth cannot do it alone and also need the opportunity to forge meaningful relationships with adults that can mentor them. Another program that is available to youth was created. The Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges formed the Foster Youth Mentoring Project. This is a collaboration between the state and local collaboration between ten community colleges as well as other agencies. The purpose of the program is to provide foster youth, 14-18, with mentors. The program also dedicated to reaching out to emancipated foster youth, ages 18-21, by providing mentoring and other support services.

Foster youth are teamed with community college student/AmeriCorps members for one-on-one mentoring. They work together to develop individualized goal plans that are set up to improve all aspects of the foster youth's life, including personal, social, academic and vocational mentors meet with their mentees 9-12 months for about ten hours per week.

For more information you can contact one of the participating community colleges or:

Bakersfield College 661-395-4580	Compton Community College 310-900-1600 Ext2115	LA Harbor College 310-522-8366	Modesto Junior College 209-575-6562	Santa Ana College 714-564-6211
Butte College 530-895-2369	Citrus Community College 626-914-8501	LA Southwest College 323-241-5260	City College of San Francisco 415-239-3172	Yuba College 530-741-6750

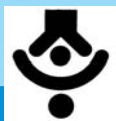
**If interested in becoming a foster/adoptive parent please call  
1-800-722-4477 or (909) 891-3381.**

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San Bernardino County  
Department of Children's Services  
Foster/Adoptive Home Services  
412 W. Hospitality Lane, 2nd Floor  
San Bernardino, CA 92415



*Foster/Adoptive Parent News*



*Summer 2005*



**Children**  
**For the**

